

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the official action dated March 2, 2006. Claims 1-9 were pending in the application. In the official action, claims 7-9 were allowed, claims 1, 4, and 5 were rejected, and claims 2, 3, and 6 were objected to. In this Amendment, claims 1, 4, and 5 have been canceled, claims 2, 3, and 6 have been amended, and new claims 10 and 11 have been added. Claims 2, 3, 6, 10, and 11 thus remain for consideration.

Applicants submit that claims 2, 3, 6, 10, and 11 are in condition for allowance and request withdrawal of the rejections in light of the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter / Claim Objections / New Claims

Claims 2, 3, and 6 were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner indicated that claims 2, 3, and 6 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants have rewritten claims 2, 3, and 6 in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 2, 3, and 6 are in condition for allowance, and request that the objections to claims 2, 3, and 6 be withdrawn.

New claims 10 and 11 depend on claim 2. Since dependent claims inherit the limitations of their respective base claims, Applicants believe that dependent claims 10 and 11 are allowable over the prior art for at least the same reasons as claim 2.

§103 Rejections

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Haartsen (U.S. Patent 6,996,100) in view of Aiello et al. (U.S. PGPUB 20050276255).

Claims 4 and 5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mangin (U.S. Patent 6,925,060) in view of Aiello.

Claims 1, 4, and 5 have been canceled, thereby rendering their rejections moot.

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions, she is invited to telephone the undersigned at (908) 654-5000.


The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any insufficient fees or credit any overpayment associated with the above-identified application to Deposit Account No. 12-1095.

The Examiner's consideration of this matter is gratefully acknowledged.

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Respectfully submitted,

By


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